

Procedures Manual



Helping Students Pay for College

GEAR UP MICHIGAN! SCHOLARSHIP

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GEAR UP Michigan! Scholarship

Section A – Program Summary

Program Title	GEAR UP Michigan! Scholarship
Enabling Legislation	Higher Education Amendments of 1998 (Public Law 105-244)
Purpose	Gaining Early Awareness & Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) is a federal program designed to provide early intervention services and programs to students in middle schools and high schools. The mission of GEAR UP is to significantly increase the number of low-income students who are prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education. When scholarships are offered, the amount is intended to significantly reduce what they have to pay for college. GEAR UP is designed to permit these students to attend college without the fear of incurring significant debt.
Funding Source	As appropriated in the Higher Education Appropriations Act.
Administrative Office	Office of Scholarships and Grants Student Financial Services Bureau P.O. Box 30462 Lansing, Michigan 48909 1-888-4-GRANTS (1-888-447-2687) (toll free)
Administrative Staff	Anne Wohlfert, Director Tom Freeland, Deputy Director Bobbie Bates, Program Coordinator 1-888-447-2687, ext. 36877 batesb@michigan.gov

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Section B – Program Administration

Institutional Eligibility

Michigan degree-granting public or nonpublic colleges, including Focus: HOPE, must be approved by the State of Michigan Board of Education and be eligible for listing in the publication entitled “Directory of Michigan Institutions of Higher Education.”

Colleges must participate in federal campus-based programs.

Michigan Department of Treasury Responsibilities

Develop forms and procedures for applicants and colleges.

Identify potential award recipients.

Provide enrollment verification rosters to colleges.

Disburse funds to colleges.

Establish policies in conjunction with the Department of Labor and Economic Growth (DLEG).

Collect refunds of scholarship funds if required.

Provide technical assistance to colleges.

Monitor program expenditures.

Complete federal reports.

Submit a report of awardees, their amounts, and their institutions to the local district GEAR UP official contact person by October 31 of the award year.

Institutional Responsibilities

Verify student eligibility on enrollment verification rosters: Pell eligibility, age, high school diploma, citizenship, Michigan residency, enrollment status, and satisfactory academic progress.

Apply funds to students’ accounts.

Return refunds to the Michigan Department of Treasury, Office of Scholarships and Grants, promptly during the academic year. Refund checks need to identify program

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Section B – Program Administration

Institutional Responsibilities (continued)

and student. Refund checks should be made payable to the “State of Michigan.”

Identify the program on communications to the student.

Institutional Records Retention

All program records including records of student eligibility, award adjustments, refund calculations, and cumulative scholarships made to each awardee at the college must be held in the financial aid office files and made available for audit purposes upon request.

Program records are to be retained in accordance with federal Title IV student aid requirements: a minimum of three (3) years from the date the college submits its fiscal year-end report.

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Section C – Campus Payments

Payment Process

The Michigan Department of Treasury will provide institutions with an enrollment verification roster for each enrollment period.

Institutions must complete and submit enrollment verification rosters AFTER each semester or term refund period.

Payments are authorized by and issued from the Michigan Department of Treasury.

Payments are disbursed on a term/semester basis.

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Section D – Student Eligibility

Age Requirement	The recipient must be less than 22 years of age at the time of the first scholarship award.
High School Diploma	The recipient must have received a high school diploma or GED.
Enrollment	The recipient must be enrolled at least half time in a Michigan degree-granting public or nonpublic college, including Focus: HOPE, that is approved by the Michigan State Board of Education, eligible for listing in the publication entitled “Directory of Michigan Institutions of Higher Education,” and a participant in federal campus-based programs.
Citizenship	<p>The recipient must be a U.S. citizen, a U.S. national, or a U.S. permanent resident who has an I-151 or I-551C.</p> <p>OR: The recipient must hold an Arrival-Departure Record (I-94) from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) showing one of the following designations: “Refugee,” “Asylum Granted,” Indefinite Parole” and/or “Humanitarian Parole,” “Cuban-Haitian Entrant, Status Pending” or “Conditional Entrant” (valid only if issued before April 1, 1980).</p>
Residency	The recipient must be a Michigan resident for the 12 months before the beginning of the award period and must not be considered a resident of any other state.
Pell Eligible	The recipient must be eligible for a federal Pell Grant at the time of the first scholarship award.
Satisfactory Academic Progress	The recipient must be in compliance with the college’s satisfactory academic progress (SAP) standard. The college must use a SAP standard at least consistent with the criteria of academic progress needed to maintain eligibility for the federal student aid programs.

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Section D – Student Eligibility

GEAR UP Participation

The recipient must have successfully participated in the GEAR UP Michigan: Reaching the Urban Centers interventions as determined by their local school's scholarship committee.

To the extent that funding permits, the Michigan Department of Treasury will make awards to students on the rank order list submitted by their local school's scholarship committee.

Non-incarceration

Incarcerated students are not eligible for award consideration. This includes persons assigned full time or part time to correctional facilities, community correction centers, residential homes, half-way houses, or under home detention. Those on electronic monitors are likewise ineligible.

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Section E – Award Computation

Application Information

Each participating GEAR UP school district provides a rank order list of students who have successfully completed the program.

Each of these students must file a FAFSA.

Students selected for a scholarship must return the GEAR UP Acceptance Form to the Michigan Department of Treasury.

Award Limits

In no case may the recipient's total amount of Title IV financial aid plus other grant or scholarship assistance exceed a student's total cost of attendance.

GEAR UP scholarships may not be considered for the purpose of awarding other Title IV grant assistance. Program intent is to maximize gift aid. GEAR UP may be used to replace the estimated family contribution allowing the family not to have to borrow to cover that cost.

Students must utilize their maximum award status within five years after the date of high school graduation.

Award Parameters

The maximum amount a student can receive is equal to the maximum Pell Grant award funded for the academic year immediately following the student's date of high school graduation.

If a student attends an institution less than full time but at least half time, GEAR UP must be reduced proportionately. Such reduction cannot be greater than the percentage reduction in tuition and fees charged to that student as a result of attending part time.

Continuation scholarships will be awarded when the student continues to be eligible for a scholarship in successive years up to a maximum of four years.

The maximum amount of a continuation scholarship is equal to the maximum Pell Grant award funded for the academic year immediately following the student's date of high school graduation.

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Section E – Award Computation

Disbursement Procedures

Payment should be credited to the student's account unless the student has already satisfied financial obligations to the college; in such cases, all or part of the award may be paid directly to the student.

The total award amount is to be divided among terms/semesters in the same manner as the Pell Grant.

Refunds

Final eligibility for payment within an enrollment period depends on the student's status at the end of the refund period.

Refunds to the program account shall be made when the student terminates eligibility between terms of the award period.

Appeal Process

The college should direct students wanting to appeal an eligibility determination to address their inquiries to the Student Financial Services Bureau, Office of Scholarships and Grants.